

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/657,986

Examiner

Kenneth W. Noland

Applicant(s)

AMMOND ET AL.

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the original application filed on 09-09-03.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-38.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 09 September 2003 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr Ainsworth on *July 21,2005.

In claim 16, on line 1, "12" has been changed to --13--.

In claim 20, online 1 , "1" has been changed to --13--.*

These changes were made to correct lack of antecedent basis for the recitations of " the second probe of the second probe assembly" in claim 16 and the recitation of " the second proximity switch of the second probe assembly" in claim 20.

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2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The claims have been allowed because claim 1 recites an escapement system to orient a plurality of fasteners having a housing having first and second stations. There is a drum member 26 to move a fastener from the first station 18 to the second station 20. There is a first seating assembly 30 to abuttingly engage the fastener at the first station and seat the fastener against a datum surface 32. The datum surface includes the housing member and the drum member. There is a first probe assembly 34separate from the first seating assembly and including a first probe 36 to abuttingly engage the fastener. There is a first proximity switch 38 operably coupled with the first probe, so that the first proximity

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switch is configured to indicate proper alignment of the fastener within the first station.

Claim 21 recites an escapement system having a plurality of nuts having the specific frusto conical-shaped first counter bore and concentrically located with the aperture of the nuts. There is a cylindrically shaped second counter bore in a second surface of the nuts and having a radius greater than the radius of the aperture. There is the drum member and a first seating assembly. There is the first probe assembly including a cylindrically-shaped first probe having a radius greater than the radius of the aperture of the nuts and the radius of the first counter bore. The first probe assembly includes a first proximity switch to register the position of the first probe member to determine the orientation of the nut with the first station. Claim 38 also recites an escapement system to orient a plurality of fasteners having the housing and a first drum member and a first seating member to abuttingly engage the fastener at the first station. There is a first probe having a first probe member to abuttingly engage the fastener and a first proximity switch. There is a reorientation assembly 40 including a second drum 98 that is rotatable with respect to the first drum to reorient the fastener. There is a third seating assembly to abuttingly engage the fastener at a third station. There is a second probe assembly having a second proximity switch to indicate proper alignment of the fastener within the third station. Finally, there is a redirect assembly in communication with a fourth station to redirect the fastener to the first station if the fastener is improperly aligned as indicated by the second proximity switch. The best cited art to Puhawan discloses an orienting ejector for fasteners such as rivets, screws, bolts where an orienting ejector is able to orient a fastener. A sensor senses whether the fastener is

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oriented and if not properly oriented, the ejector discards the fastener. The reference to Sakamoto et al discloses a part incorporating system utilizing a plurality of first and second visual sensors and makes adjustments by the difference of the first and second visual sensors and a predetermined value. Both references do not disclose the stations or a drum member or the first seating assembly or the first probe assembly to abuttingly engage the fastener. The claimed invention is not taught nor suggested by any combination of art to disclose the claimed invention.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kenneth W. Noland whose telephone number is (571) 272-6941. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, each week.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Donald Walsh can be reached on (703) 306-4173. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Kenneth W. Noland 7/26/2005
KENNETH W. NOLAND
PRIMARY EXAMINER